

Appl. No. 10/612,254
Amdt. Dated July 26, 2005
Reply to Office Action of March 30, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A spare tire carrier for vehicles which comprises:

a support arm for mounting a spare tire thereon, said support arm having a fixed end, and a free end and a central axis; and

a cooperating tubular assembly coupled to the fixed end of the support arm for mounting the support arm on a vehicle,

said cooperating tubular assembly including upper and lower opposed planar guide plates which are coupled together so as to allow for relative rotational movement of said upper and lower opposed planar guide plates about a common axis which extends through the upper and lower guide plates, whereby relative rotational movement of the upper and lower guide plates about said common axis simultaneously causes the support arm to rotate about its central axis while pivoting the central axis of the support arm with respect to the cooperative tubular assembly.

Claim 2 (Original): A spare tire carrier for vehicles according to claim 1, wherein the

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cooperating tubular assembly comprises an upper tubular member to which the upper guide plate is attached and a lower tubular member to which the lower guide plate is attached.

Claim 3 (Original): A spare tire carrier for vehicles according to claim 2, wherein the upper and lower tubular members each have a central axis and the upper and lower guide plates are respectively attached to the upper and lower tubular members at an angle that is non-perpendicular to the central axes of the upper and lower tubular members.

Claim 4 (Original): A spare tire carrier for vehicles according to claim 2, wherein the upper and lower tubular members are substantially collinear.

Claim 5 (Original): A spare tire carrier for vehicles according to claim 2, wherein at least one of the upper and lower tubular members is hollow.

Claim 6 (Original): A spare tire carrier for vehicles according to claim 2, wherein the upper and lower guide plates are coupled together about an axially central element that extends through at least one of the upper and lower guide plate.

Claim 7 (Original): A spare tire carrier for vehicles according to claim 6, wherein the axially central member comprises a threaded member.

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Claim 8 (Original): A spare tire carrier for vehicles according to claim 1, further including a latch mechanism for engaging the free end of the support arm.

Claim 9 (Currently amended): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle, which spare tire carrier comprises:

a support arm for mounting a spare tire thereon, said support arm having a fixed end and a free end and a central axis; and

a cooperating tubular assembly coupling the fixed end of the support arm to the under side of the vehicle,

said cooperating tubular assembly including upper and lower opposed planar guide plates which are coupled together so as to allow for relative rotational movement of said upper and lower opposed planar guide plates about a common axis which extends through the upper and lower guide plates, whereby relative rotational movement of the upper and lower guide plates about said common axis simultaneously causes the support arm to rotate about its central axis while pivoting the central axis of the support arm with respect to the cooperative tubular assembly.

Claim 10 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 9, wherein the cooperating tubular assembly comprises an upper

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tubular member to which the upper guide plate is attached and a lower tubular member to which the lower guide plate is attached.

Claim 11 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 10, wherein the upper and lower tubular members each have a central axis and the upper and lower guide plates are respectively attached to the upper and lower tubular members at an angle that is non-perpendicular to the central axes of the upper and lower tubular members.

Claim 12 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 10, wherein the upper and lower tubular members are substantially collinear.

Claim 13 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 10, wherein at least one of the upper and lower tubular members is hollow.

Claim 14 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 10, wherein the upper and lower guide plates are coupled together about an axially central element that extends through at least one of the upper and lower guide

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plate.

Claim 15 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 14, wherein the axially central member comprises a threaded member.

Claim 16 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 9, further including a latch mechanism for engaging the free end of the support arm.

Claim 17 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 16, wherein the free end of the support arm includes structure for the latch mechanism to engage.

Claim 18 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 9, wherein the vehicle comprises one of a motor vehicle and a non-motor vehicle.

Claim 19 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 18, wherein the vehicle comprises a towed vehicle.

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Claim 20 (Original): A vehicle including a spare tire carrier mounted to an under side of the vehicle according to claim 19, wherein the vehicle comprises one of a camper and a trailer.